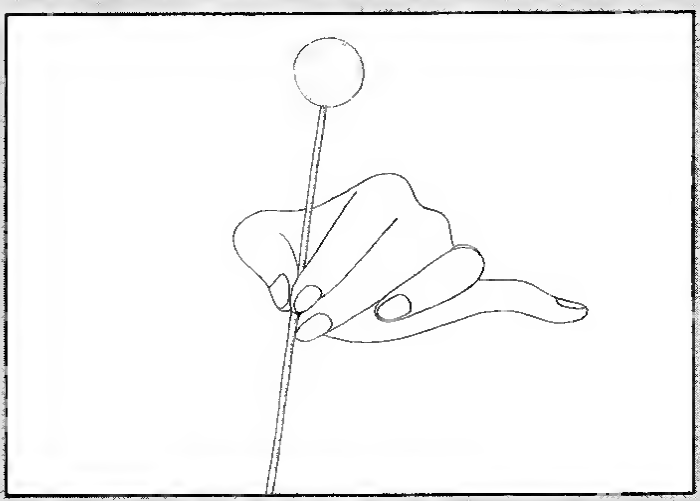
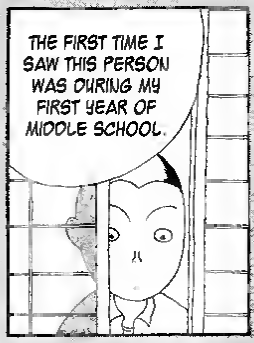
THE 53RD NEWCOMER COMIC AWARD PRIZE-WINNING WORK!

創刊30周年記念読み切り第2弾



山本耳かき店



AN IMPRESSIVE STORY ON 32 PAGES!

ah
aah
GRANDFA
oh
oh
oh
Fuu
2
FOR SOME TIME MY GREAT GRANDFATHER HAD WISHED TO HAVE HIS EARS CLEANED AS HE DEPARTED. AT THE AGE OF 102 HE DIED PEACEFULLY.
ON HIS DEATH-BED
ハラ

[BIG COMIC ORIGINAL]

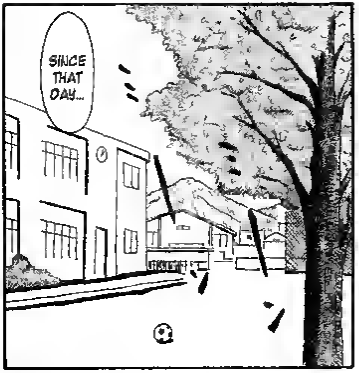
山米耳かき店

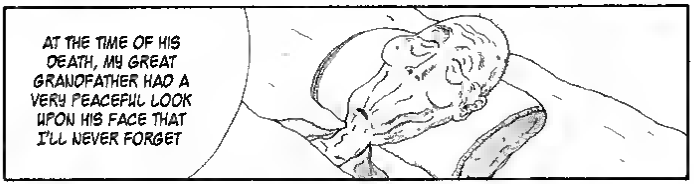
Yamamoto's Ear Cleaning Shop

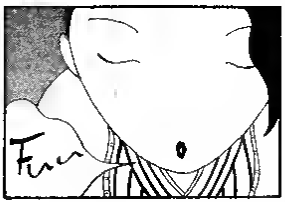
Story & Art by
Yarou ABE
Translated by
Meganeguard

安部夜郎

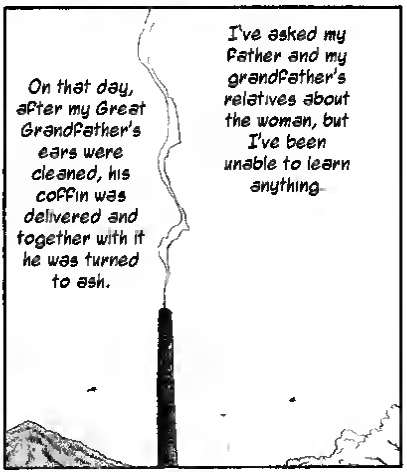
I'VE ALSO WANTED TO HAVE MY EARS CLEANED


SINCE THAT DAY...

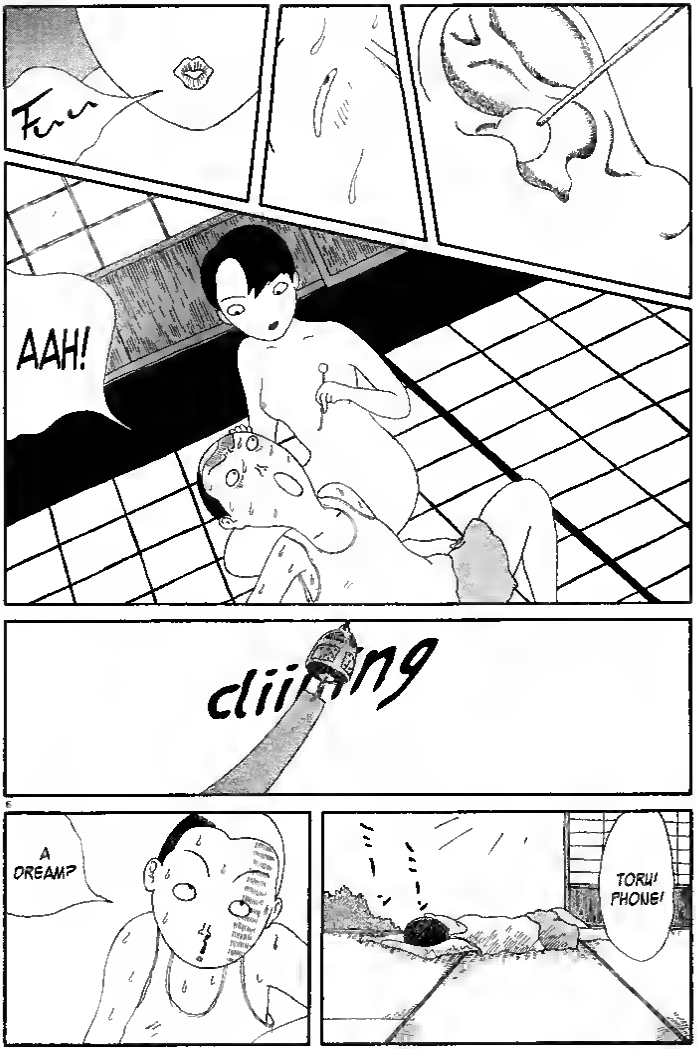

AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH, MY GREAT GRANDFATHER HAD A VERY PEACEFUL LOOK UPON HIS FACE THAT I'LL NEVER FORGET

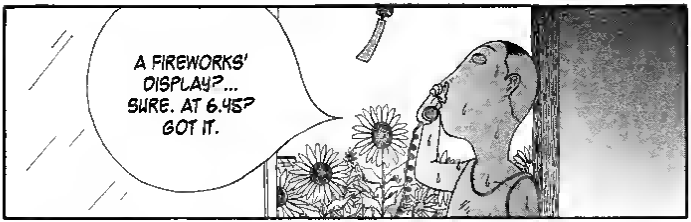

Fiuu

Uh Uuh


On that day, after my Great Grandfather's ears were cleaned, his coffin was delivered and together with it he was turned to ash.
I've asked my father and my grandfather's relatives about the woman, but I've been unable to learn anything.

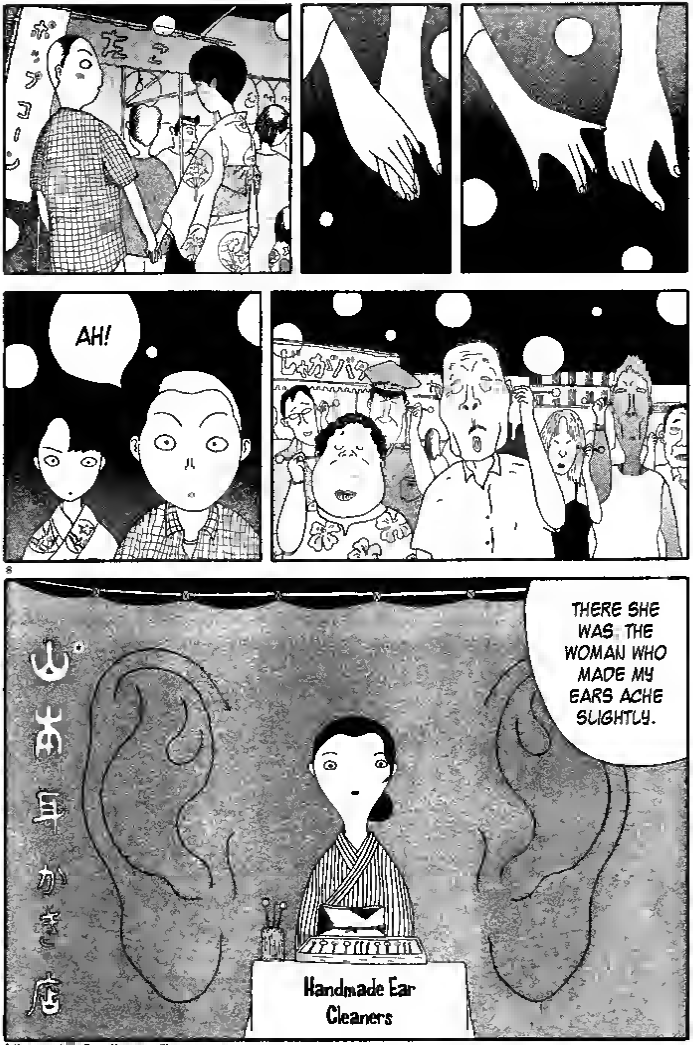
HUH?
HEY, TORU, YOU WEIRDO, I'M TALKING HERE
AH...
LEMME GIVE YOU SOMETHING THAT YOU WILL LIKE.
I told this girl, her name is Kaori Tashiro, to shut up
HA, HA, HA!
S-STOP THAT!
caused my penis to jerk erect immediately.
However, to be honest, the breath of air she blew ..


Fuu
AAH!
clinng
A DREAM?
TORU! PHONE!


A FIREWORKS' DISPLAY?... SURE. AT 6.45? GOT IT.

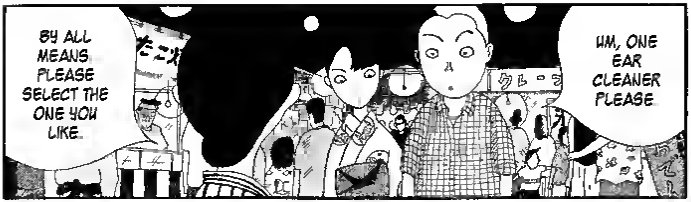
UNLIKE THE WAY SHE WAS AT SCHOOL, SHE LOOKED LIKE AN ADULT AND WAS UNREASONABLY CUTE.

KAORI TASHIRO WAS WEARING A YUKATA*.
* light cotton kimono usually being worn in summer

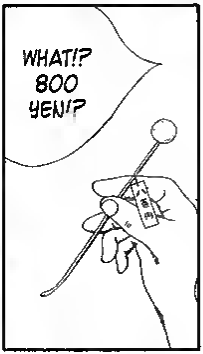


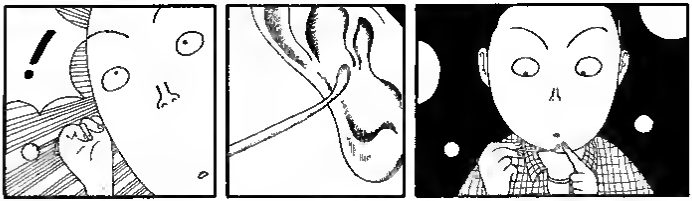
8

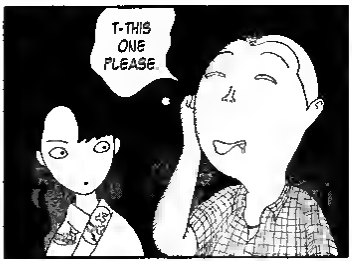
[1] Yamamoto's Ear Cleaning Shop


BY ALL MEANS PLEASE SELECT THE ONE YOU LIKE.
UM, ONE EAR CLEANER PLEASE.

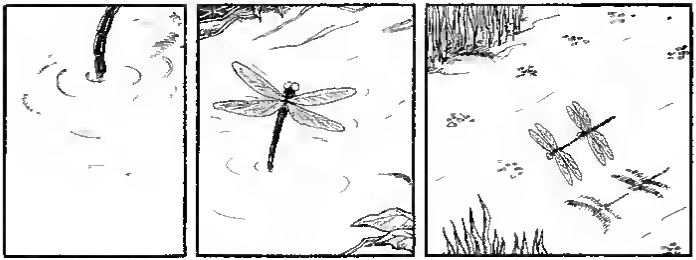
BY ALL MEANS PLEASE TRY IT
EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THESE EAR CLEANING UTENSILS ARE HANDMADE. AFTER YOU USE ONE YOURSELF, I THINK THAT YOU WILL UNDERSTAND.

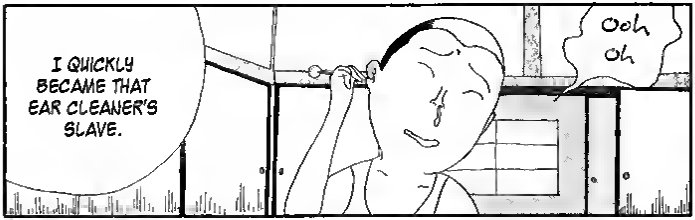

WHAT!? 800 YEN!?

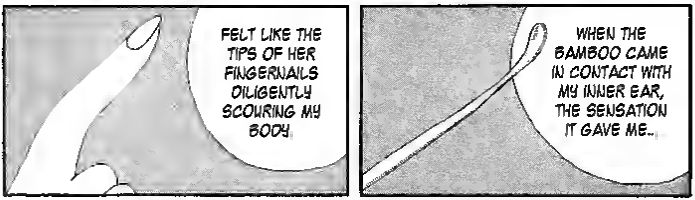

!

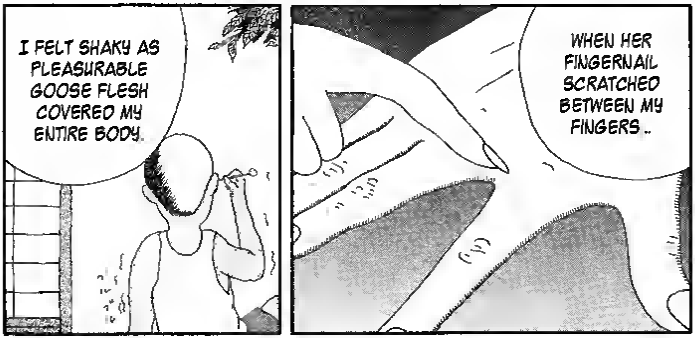

T-THIS ONE PLEASE.

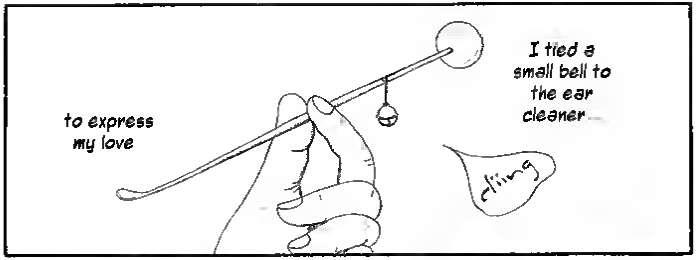
WELL, HOW IS IT?

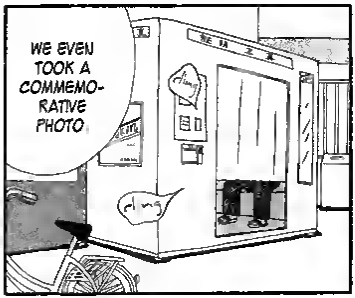



I QUICKLY BECAME THAT EAR CLEANER'S SLAVE.
Ooh Oh


FELT LIKE THE TIPS OF HER FINGERNAILS DILIGENTLY SCOURING MY BODY.
WHEN THE BAMBOO CAME IN CONTACT WITH MY INNER EAR, THE SENSATION IT GAVE ME..

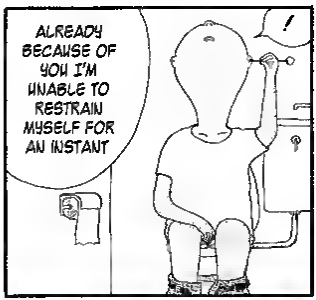

I FELT SHAKY AS PLEASURABLE GOOSE FLESH COVERED MY ENTIRE BODY.
WHEN HER FINGERNAIL SCRATCHED BETWEEN MY FINGERS..

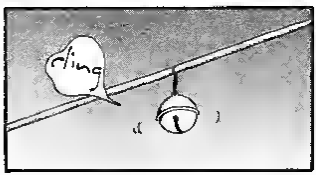

I tied a small bell to the ear cleaner
to express my love
cling

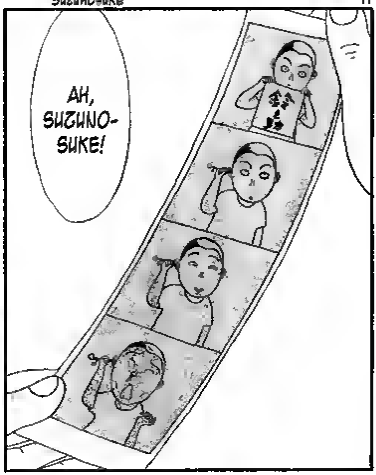

WE EVEN TOOK A COMMEMO-RATIVE PHOTO
cling
cling

I NAMED IT SUZU-NOSUKE
金之助
カシャ

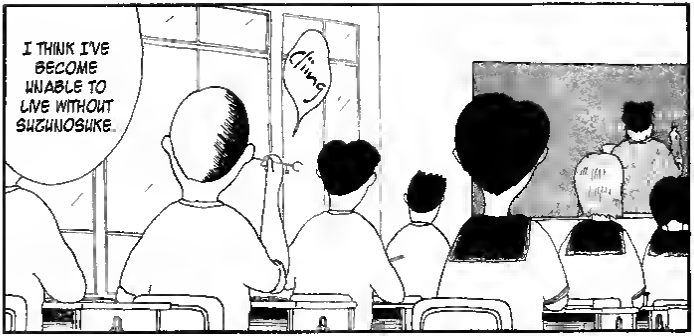
* Suzunosuke


ALREADY BECAUSE OF YOU I'M UNABLE TO RESTRAIN MYSELF FOR AN INSTANT
!


cling

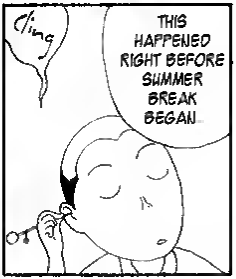

AH, SUZUNO-SUKE!

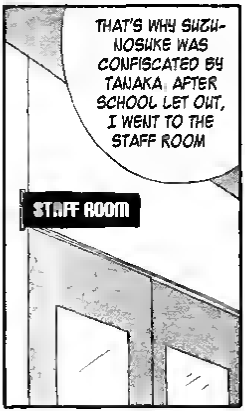
I WOULD FALL INTO THE HANDS OF MY ENEMY'S TRAP AND BE CAPTURED
IF I WAS A SPY...
I WOULD NOT OPEN MY MOUTH.
I HAD DECIDED THAT EVEN UNDER TORTURE...
I MIGHT EVEN BETRAY A FRIEND.
STOP IT!
Cling
SPIT IT OUT!
Cling
HOWEVER, WITH SUZUNO-SUKE CHIMING NEAR MY EAR.
WELL THEN...


I THINK I'VE BECOME UNABLE TO LIVE WITHOUT SUZUNOSUKE.
Cling

HEY, LOOK OUT
Cling

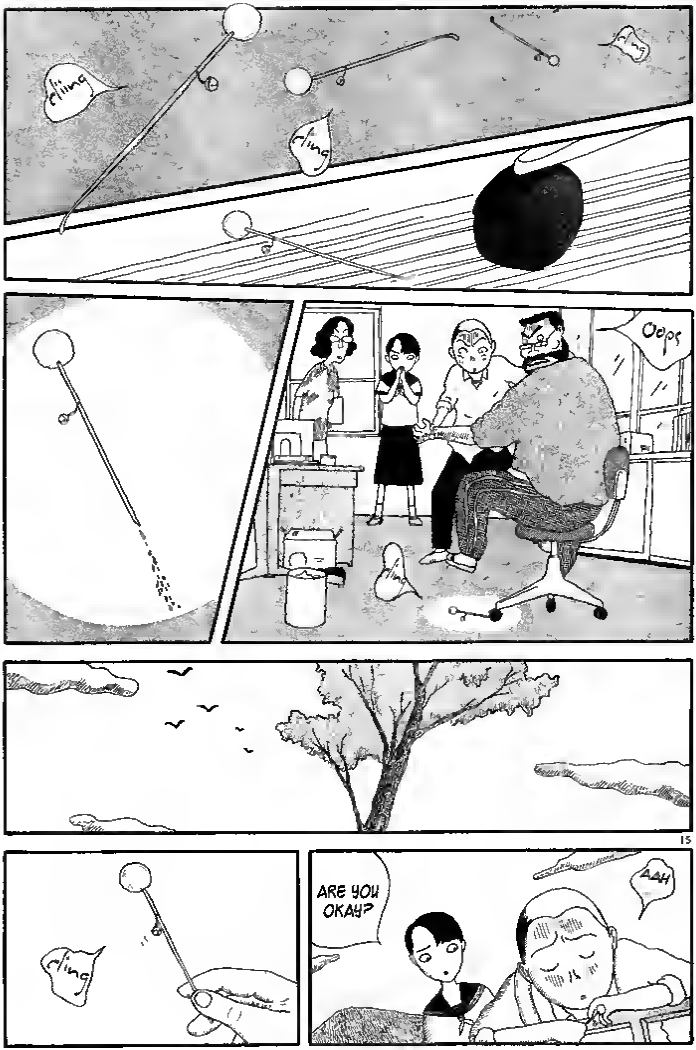
Cling

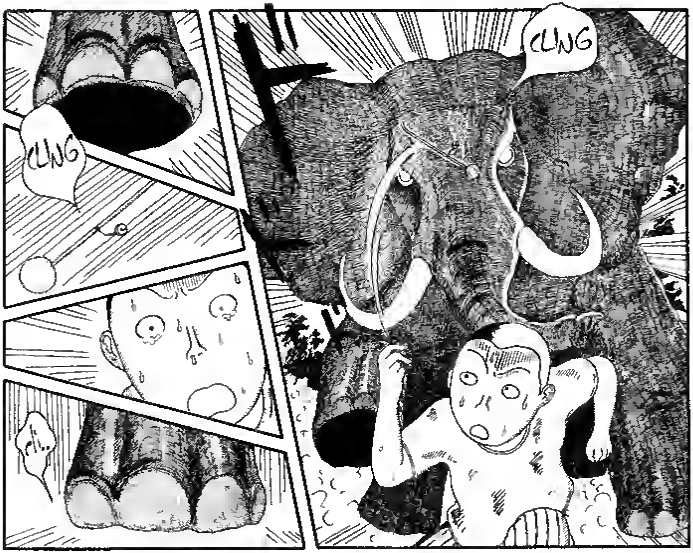

Cling
THIS HAPPENED RIGHT BEFORE SUMMER BREAK BEGAN.


THAT'S WHY SUZU-NOSUKE WAS CONFISCATED BY TANAKA. AFTER SCHOOL LET OUT, I WENT TO THE STAFF ROOM
STAFF ROOM

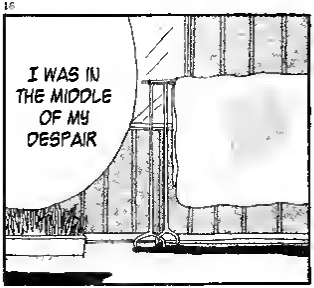
WHAT THE HECK DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING USING THAT THING DURING THE LESSON!
I'VE HAD IT WITH THAT NOISY BELL OF YOURS!
Cling

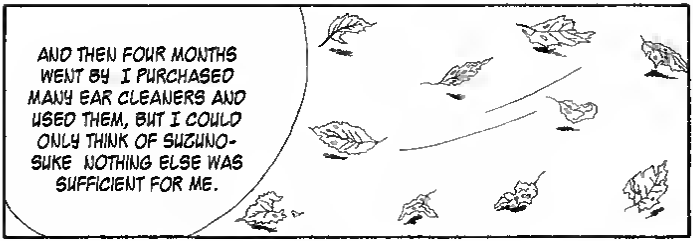
AH..
AT THAT MOMENT, MY BLOOD FROZE.
EXCUSE ME
RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES, THIS OODBALL WAS SOILING SUZU-NOSUKE
cling
cling
MY SUZUNO-SUKE WAS RINGING NEAR TANAKA'S EAR
SOUNDED LIKE SUZUNOSUKE SCREAMING LOUD FOR HELP
TO ME, THIS BELL'S RING
cling
14
cling
YOU BASTARD!!
WHAT THE...


cling
cling
cling
Oops
ARE YOU OKAY?
Aaa
cling

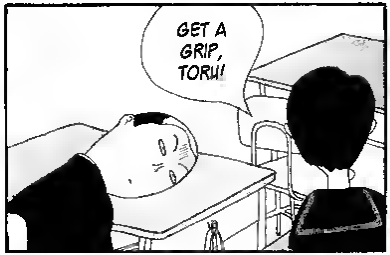

CLNG
CLNG

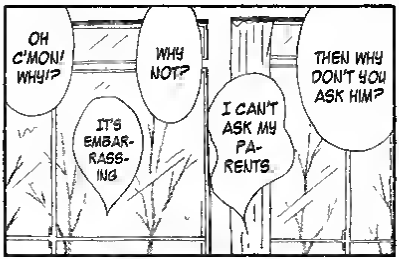
SUZUNO-SUKE!

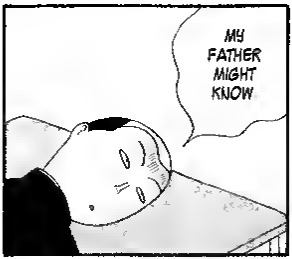

I WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF MY DESPAIR

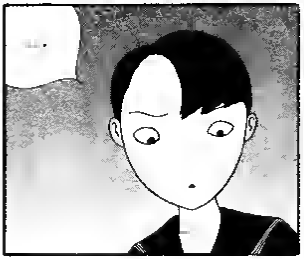

AND THEN FOUR MONTHS WENT BY I PURCHASED MANY EAR CLEANERS AND USED THEM, BUT I COULD ONLY THINK OF SUZUNOSUKE NOTHING ELSE WAS SUFFICIENT FOR ME.

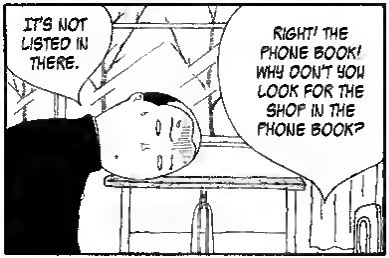
DO YOU KNOW OF ANYONE WHO'D KNOW THE PROPRIETRESS OF THE EAR CLEANING SHOP?


GET A GRIP, TORU!

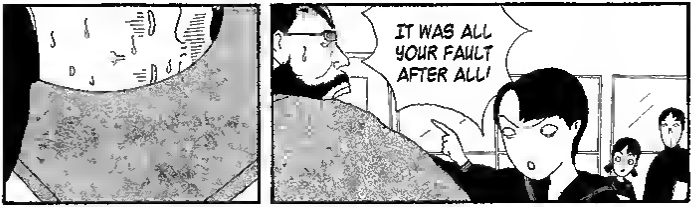

OH C'MON! WHY!?
WHY NOT?
IT'S EMBARRASSING
I CAN'T ASK MY PARENTS.
THEN WHY DON'T YOU ASK HIM?

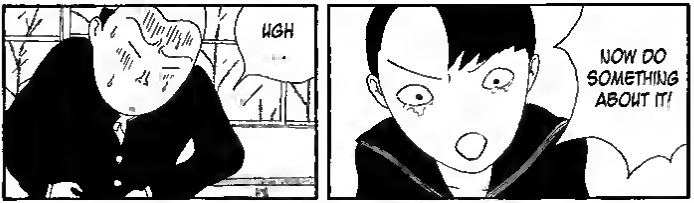

MY FATHER MIGHT KNOW

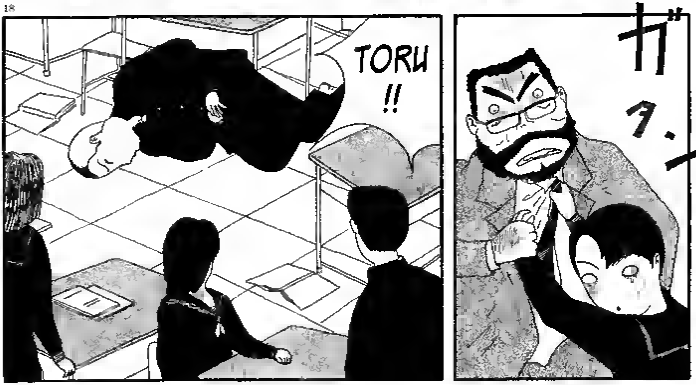


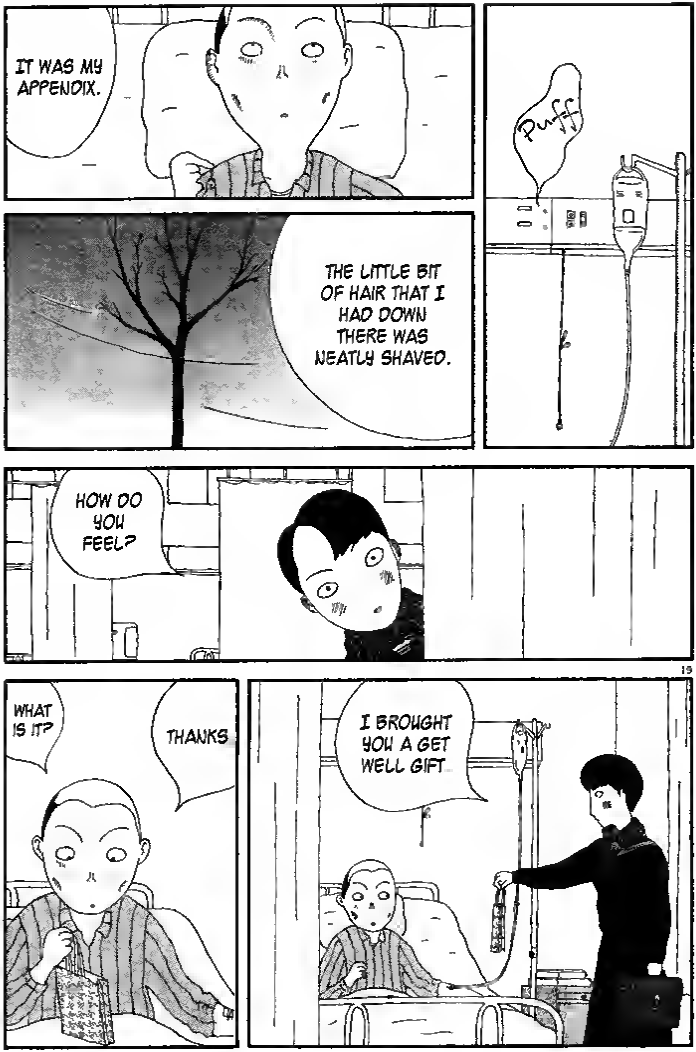

IT'S NOT LISTED IN THERE.
RIGHT! THE PHONE BOOK! WHY DON'T YOU LOOK FOR THE SHOP IN THE PHONE BOOK?

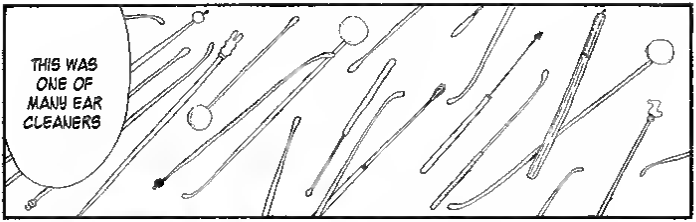
WH-
WHAT?
DAMN! WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO FOR TORU, HUH!?

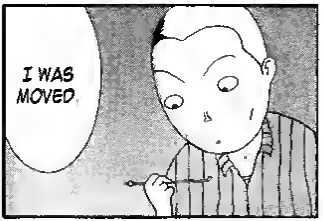

IT WAS ALL YOUR FAULT AFTER ALL!

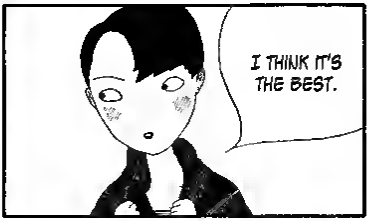

UGH
...
NOW DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!

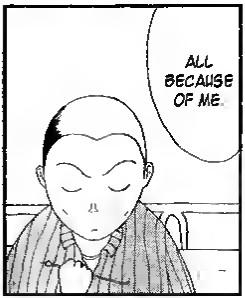

TORU
!!
ガシ

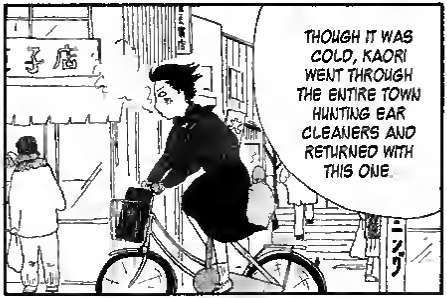

IT WAS MY APPENDIX.
Puff
THE LITTLE BIT OF HAIR THAT I HAD DOWN THERE WAS NEATLY SHAVED.
HOW DO YOU FEEL?
WHAT IS IT?
THANKS
I BROUGHT YOU A GET WELL GIFT.

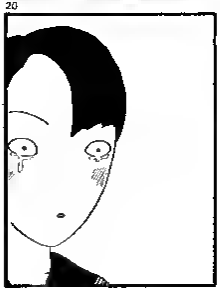

THIS WAS ONE OF MANY EAR CLEANERS


I WAS MOVED.


I THINK IT'S THE BEST.


ALL BECAUSE OF ME.

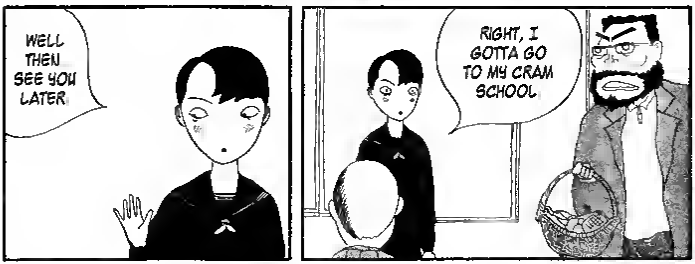

THOUGH IT WAS COLD, KAORI WENT THROUGH THE ENTIRE TOWN HUNTING EAR CLEANERS AND RETURNED WITH THIS ONE.

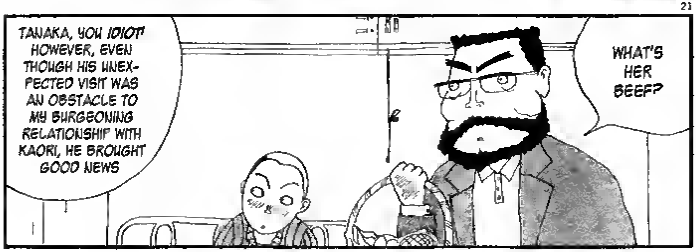


KAORI

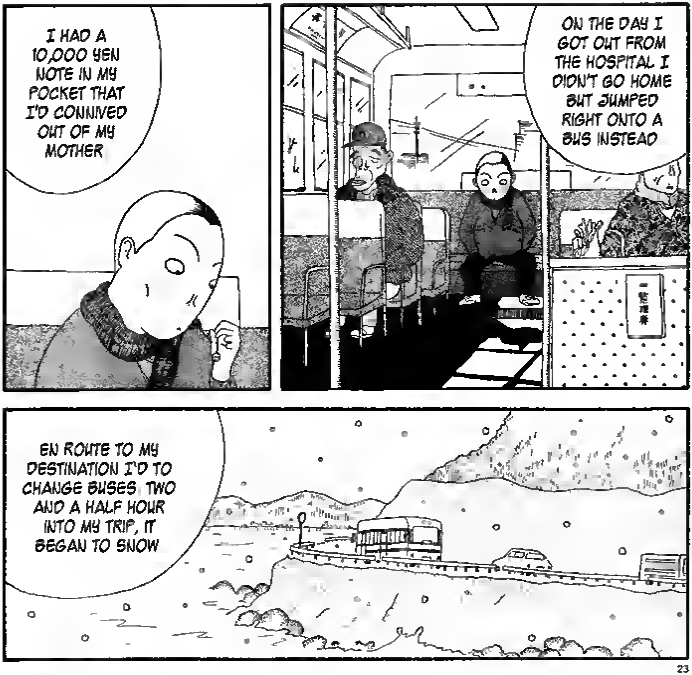
I'M REALLY HAPPY I JUST HAD TO DO SOME-THING..

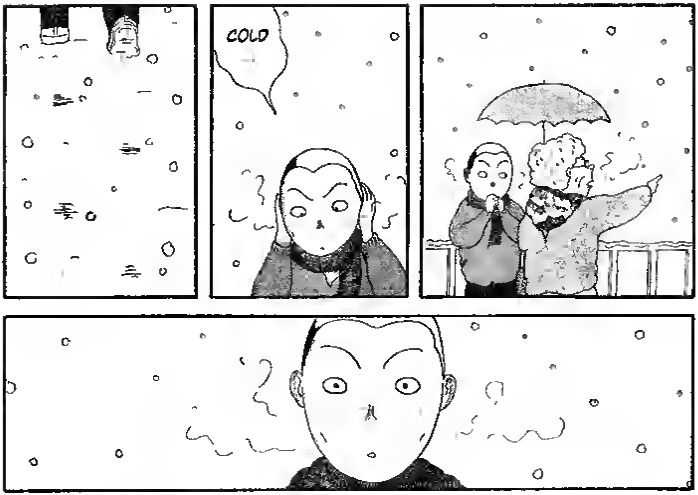
HELLO THERE!
Y-YES, TORU...
AH, I SEE KAORI ALSO CAME
DAMN...

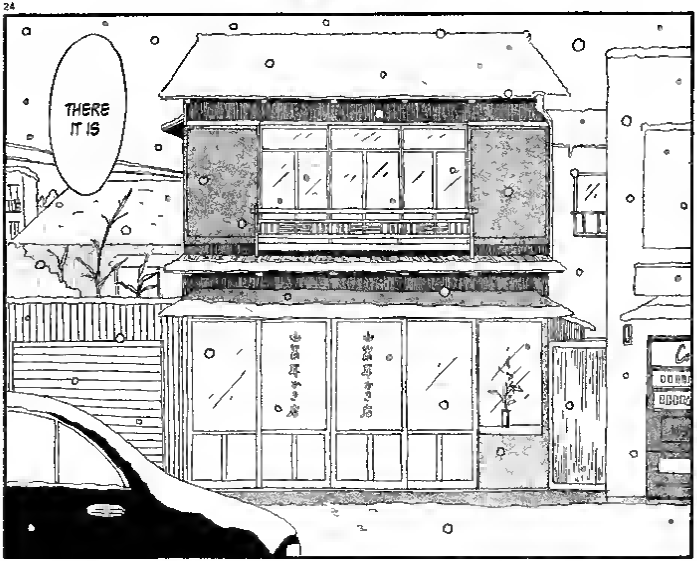

WELL THEN SEE YOU LATER
RIGHT, I GOTTA GO TO MY CRAM SCHOOL


TANAKA, YOU IDIOT! HOWEVER, EVEN THOUGH HIS UNEXPECTED VISIT WAS AN OBSTACLE TO MY BURGEONING RELATIONSHIP WITH KAORI, HE BROUGHT GOOD NEWS
WHAT'S HER BEEF?

THERE SHE WAS. HER PICTURE WAS IN THE NEWS-PAPER
ISN'T THIS THE EAR CLEANING SHOP THAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR?
NEXT SUNDAY I'LL GO THERE AND BUY YOU A NEW EAR CLEANER
THE SHOP'S PHONE NUMBER WAS NOT LISTED IN THE PHONE BOOK BECAUSE NAKAMACHI IS A CITY LOCATED ON THE BORDER OF THE NEIGHBORING PRE-FECTURE
NAKA-MACHI?
I'LL GO THERE AND PURCHASE ONE MYSELF AFTER I GET OUT FROM THE HOSPITAL. I'LL DEFINITELY GO!
NO, PLEASE DON'T DO THAT!
IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN BECAUSE THAT PERSON FLASHED ACROSS MY MIND.
I UNINTEN-TIONALLY BLURTED THIS OUT.
UNTIL THEN COULD YOU PLEASE BE SILENT ABOUT THIS AND NOT TELL KAORI?


I HAD A 10,000 YEN NOTE IN MY POCKET THAT I'D CONNIVED OUT OF MY MOTHER
ON THE DAY I GOT OUT FROM THE HOSPITAL I DIDN'T GO HOME BUT JUMPED RIGHT ONTO A BUS INSTEAD
EN ROUTE TO MY DESTINATION I'D TO CHANGE BUSES. TWO AND A HALF HOUR INTO MY TRIP, IT BEGAN TO SNOW

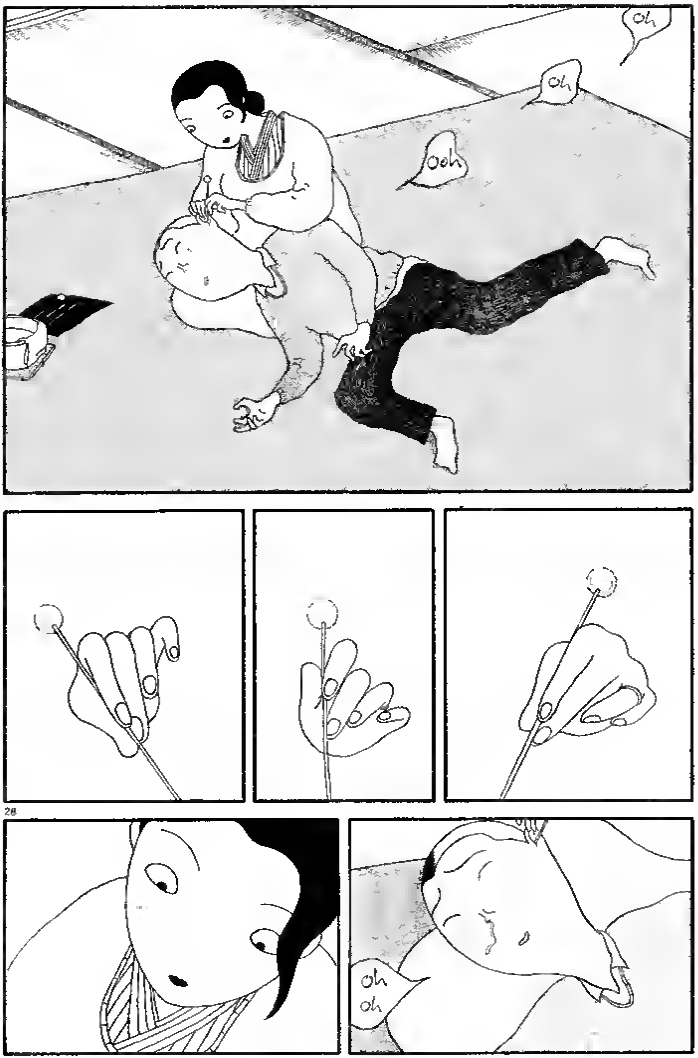

COLD


THERE IT IS

EXCUSE ME, PLEASE
Aah!
EXCUSE ME.
Ah Aah
Uh uh uh
I'LL BE FINISHED SOON. WOULD YOU PLEASE WAIT FOR ME OVER THERE?
Ah Aah! Ah
Ear cleaners 800 Yen
Ear cleaning 800 Yen
Oh oh oh

THAT FELT GREAT
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRON-AGE
UH-
THANKS A LOT
WELL, CAN I HAVE ONE EAR CLEANER?
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
CERTAINLY. BY ANY MEANS, PLEASE ENTER HERE
A-AND CAN I GET MY EARS CLEANED, TOO?

I SEE
AH, YES UNFORTU-NATELY THAT ONE BROKE.
IF MY MEMORY SERVES ME RIGHT THEN YOU'RE THE ONE WHO PUR-CHASED AN EAR CLEANER FROM ME DURING THE FIRE-WORKS FESTIVAL IN OYAMAMACHI, CORRECT?
AH ...
YOUR EARS'VE TURNED DEEP RED FROM THE COLD
IT MUST BE COLD OUTSIDE.
HER HANDS WERE WARM, SOFT, AND FRAGRANT.
27
YES.
WELL, SHALL WE BEGIN?


oh
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ooh
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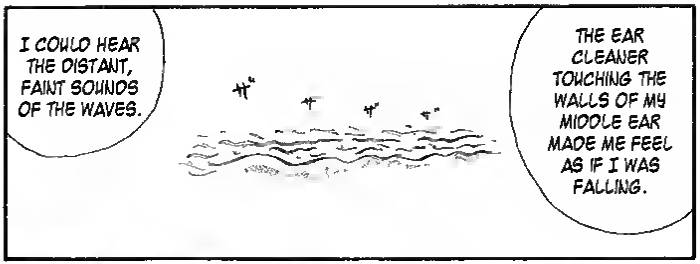
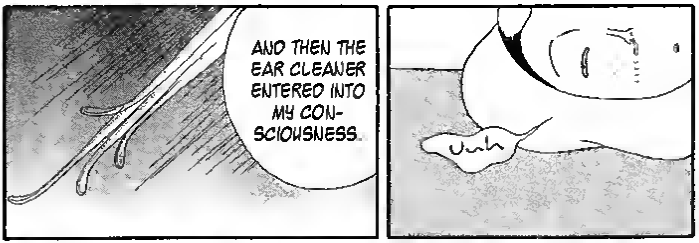
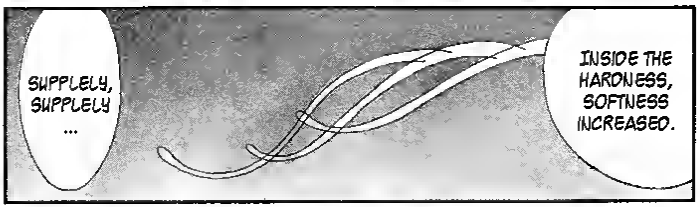
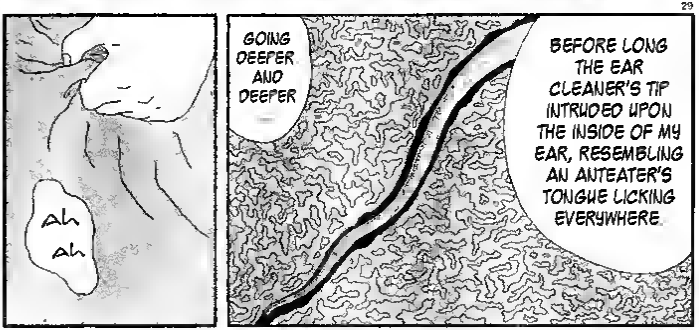
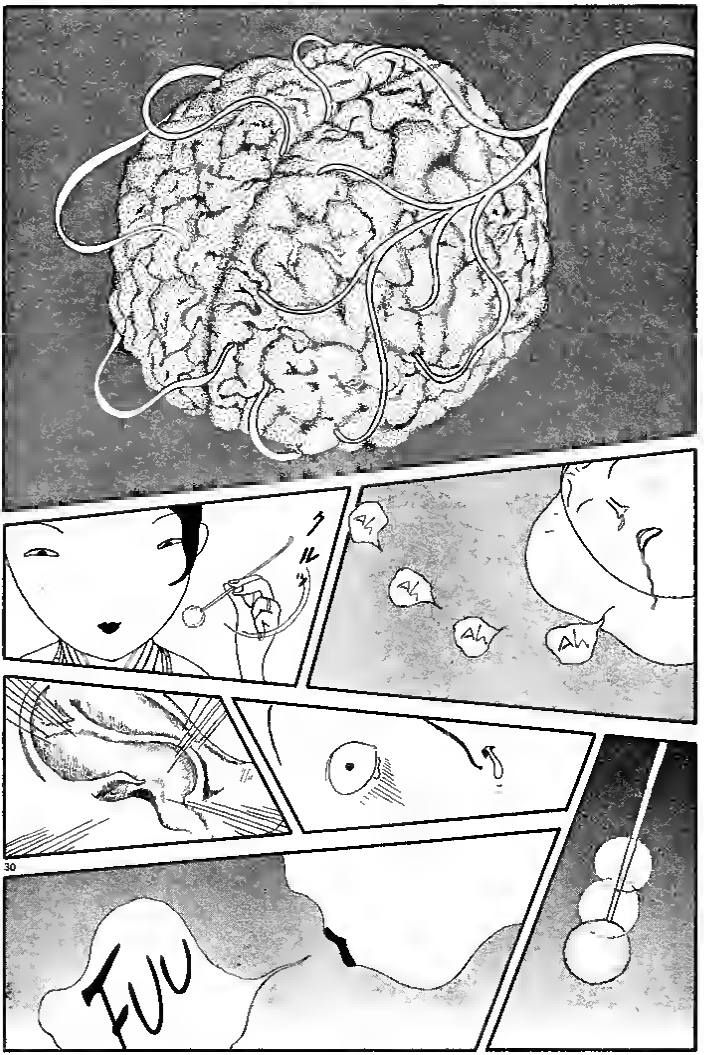
oh


I COULD HEAR THE DISTANT, FAINT SOUNDS OF THE WAVES.
THE EAR CLEANER TOUCHING THE WALLS OF MY MIDDLE EAR MADE ME FEEL AS IF I WAS FALLING.


AND THEN THE EAR CLEANER ENTERED INTO MY CONSCIOUSNESS.
Unh


SUPPLELY, SUPPLELY ...
INSIDE THE HARDNESS, SOFTNESS INCREASED.


Ah Ah
GOING DEEPER AND DEEPER
BEFORE LONG THE EAR CLEANER'S TIP INTRUDED UPON THE INSIDE OF MY EAR, RESEMBLING AN ANTEATER'S TONGUE LICKING EVERYWHERE.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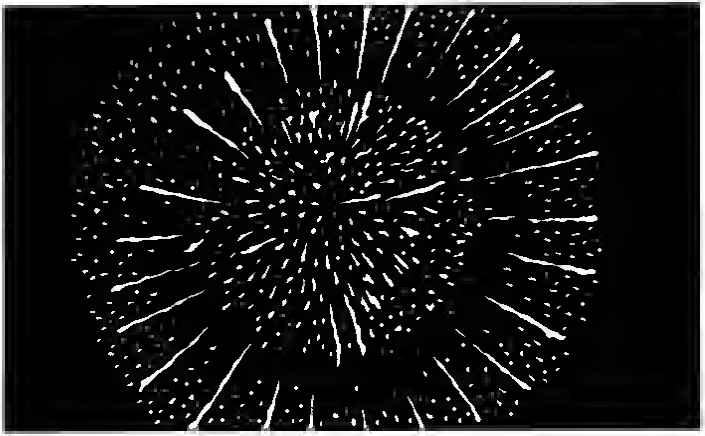
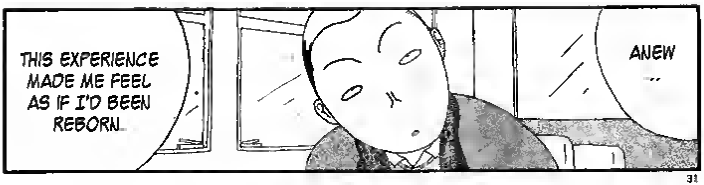
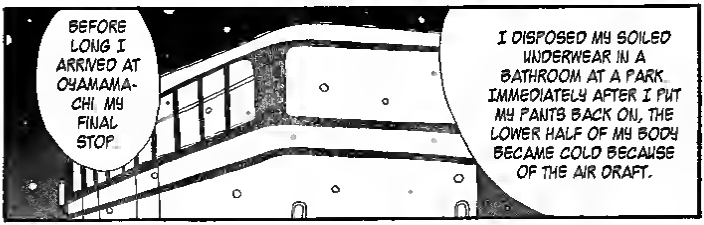
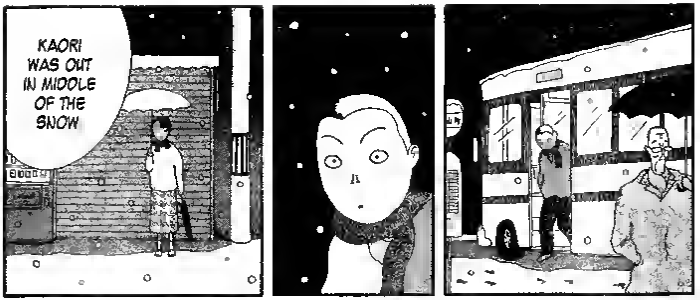
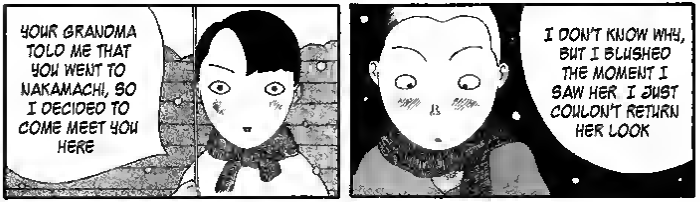


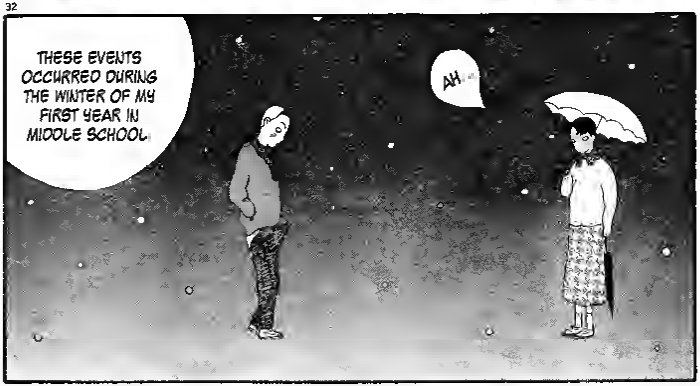

THIS EXPERIENCE MADE ME FEEL AS IF I'D BEEN REBORN...
ANEW ...


BEFORE LONG I ARRIVED AT OYAMAMA-CHI. MY FINAL STOP.
I DISPOSED MY SOILED UNDERWEAR IN A BATHROOM AT A PARK. IMMEDIATELY AFTER I PUT MY PANTS BACK ON, THE LOWER HALF OF MY BODY BECAME COLD BECAUSE OF THE AIR DRAFT.


KAORI WAS OUT IN MIDDLE OF THE SNOW


YOUR GRANDMA TOLD ME THAT YOU WENT TO NAKAMACHI, SO I DECIDED TO COME MEET YOU HERE
I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT I BLUSHED THE MOMENT I SAW HER. I JUST COULDN'T RETURN HER LOOK

AH, UM, I SEE


THESE EVENTS OCCURRED DURING THE WINTER OF MY FIRST YEAR IN MIDDLE SCHOOL
AH

The End